Whitehall

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DOLGELLEY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

The Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1938.

PRINTED BY HUGHES BROTHERS, "DWDD" OFFICE, DOLGELLEY.

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TO THE DOLGELLEY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Davies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my report upon the sanitary condition of your district during 1938.

The Dolgelley Rural District consists of 13 parishes, and has an area of 150,128 acres. The residential population for the year 1938 is estimated by the Registrar-General to be 7,170 as compared with 7,246 in 1937.

The district may be described in general terms as rough, mountainous, and mainly agricultural, where the soil is mainly thin and poor, and where sheep farming largely predominates.

It contains a number of mountains of considerable heights, such as Cader Idris and Arran Fawddwy, both being nearly 3,000 feet in height. Between the mountain ranges are many deep and beautiful valleys. The small, hardy Welsh sheep find pasture upon the extensive uplands. The sea coast forms largely the Western boundary of the district. The inhabitants are mainly engaged in agricultural pursuits. There are a few slate quaries in the parishes of Talyllyn and Llanfihangel-y-Pennant.

The number of inhabited houses at the end of 1938, according to the Rate Books, were 2,406.

The rateable value at the same date was 21,037, and the sum represented by a penny rate was £85 5s. 11d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Live Births—Legitimate ...	99	51	48
Illegitimate ..	5	4	1
Still Births—Legitimate . . .	6	4	2
Illegitimate . . .	1	0	1

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	14.50
Birth Rate legitimate infants per 1000 population	13.81
Birth rate illegitimate infants per 1000 population	.70
Still Births—Rate per 1000 population	.98
Rate per 1000 total (live and still births)	63·06

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Deaths	125	58	67

Death Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population 17.43

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES.

There was one death during the year from Puerperal Causes.

Maternal Mortality per 1000 live births	9.62
Maternal Mortality per 1000 live and still births	9.01

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE.

Total Death Rate	96.15
Total Legitimate Infants	96.15
Total Illegitimate Infants	—
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	1
Death Rate from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) per 1000 of population	9.62

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

There have been no alterations or developments since 1930, which need to be mentioned.

It is regretable that there is no Ambulance service for the larger part of the area. Most of the serious accident cases and acute surgical cases have to be conveyed to the nearest hospital in an ordinary open or closed car. Transit thus necessitates a good deal of jolting and pulling about of the patient. This adds to the initial high degree of shock in these serious accident cases and surgical emergencies. One can only call it criminal that some of these profoundly shocked patients are removed to Hospital in an ordinary closed or open car.

Arrangements have been made to convene a Joint Conferenc of neighbouring authorities to consider a joint scheme.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supplies.

The District as a whole is well served in respect of water supplies, and the following is a brief report on the different supplies :—

Aberangell.—The recent extensions carried out on this supply have been greatly appreciated, and the village is now well supplied with water.

Abergynolwyn.—This supply has been very satisfactory during the year, and no alterations were carried out to the supply.

Bontddu.—After the complete re-laying of the water mains at Bontddu the supply has been satisfactory.

Corris.—Not much progress has been made in respect of this supply.

Dyffryn.—This supply has continued to give trouble during the year, and especially during August. During August Bank Holiday week, several houses in Dyffryn were without water during the early hours of the day. The Sanitary Inspector connected the Dyffryn Supply to the Talybont Supply, and by this means the shortage was overcome. Since then no shortage has been experienced.

In September an Inquiry was held at Llanbedr in respect of the quantity of water required by the Deudraeth Rural Distrist Council to supply Llanbedr and Gwynfryn. At that Inquiry it was decided that Llanbedr and Gwynfryn were to receive a supply of 11,000 gallons per day to be measured by meters, and this Council have agreed to supply this amount. Futher to the Inquiry, samples of the water at Dyffryn have been taken, and the reports show that the water is plumbo-solvent to a very great extent. I view this with deep concern, and I cannot too strongley recommend that immediate action be taken to eliminate the dangerous action of the water on lead.

I understand that it is proposed to lay 1,400 yards of Class 'B' Everite pipes from the intake to the reservoir in order to increase the delivery at the reservoir.

Ganllwyd Water Supply.—Not much progress has been made in respect of this supply. The Sanitary Inspector took three samples of water from different sources at Ganllwyd, but not one of the three reports were satisfactory.

Llanegryn.—Certain adjustments have been carried out to the intake tank, and the supply is now working satisfactorily.

Llanfachreth.—Certain repairs were carried out to the intake tank of this supply.

Llanelltyd.—No further developments have been carried out to this supply to eliminate the possibility of a shortage of water in places. The Sanitary Inspector has visited possible sources, and has submitted estimates.

Llwyngwril.—The water main of this supply was extended from near Henblas to building plots along the Towyn Road. Several small bursts occurred for a short period, but these were repaired, and the supply is satisfactory.

Rhoslefain.—A well was sunk in Rhoslefain field, and gaugings were taken, which showed that at depth of 41 feet 9,600 gallons were yielded per 24 hours. Another well, known as Ffynnon-y-gwydd, which had been recommended as a suitable source, was found to be insufficient. The work in respect of this supply is still progressing, and I hope the work will be completed during next year.

Taicynhaeaf.—This supply has been very satisfactory throughout the year.

Talybont.—The reservoir and the intake tank for this supply have been cleaned, and there is a good supply of water available. This supply was connected to the Dyffryn Supply in order to overcome shortage of water at Dyffryn during the summer months. The supplies have now been disconnected.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Corris.—No futher steps have been taken in respect of a sewerage scheme for this village.

Dyffryn.—Plans of a sewerage scheme for the village of Dyffryn have been completed. It is intended to proceed with part of the scheme for a cost of £5,539. This part covers the village of Dyffryn only, and is the part which is badly in need of a sewer. The actual work on the sewer has not yet been commenced.

Fairbourne.—Early in the year a length of sewer collapsed at Fairbourne, but this was repaired immediately. During the severe gales in November the pumping station at Fairbourne was flooded, and the storage and outfall tanks were filled with a considerable amount of sand. The pumping plant was thoroughly cleaned, and steps were taken to prevent any further flooding. The plant is now working satisfactorily.

Llwyngwril.—The extension of the sewer from Henblas along the Towyn Road has been completed. This work was done in order to take in certain properties, and was carried out by Contract at a cost of £320.

Rivers and Streams.

There are no industries in the district to pollute the rivers and streams. There are some careless individuals who throw their household refuse into our beautiful streams. In the districts which are regularly scavenged there is no excuse for this objectionable habit. Warning notices are posted up in some localities to prevent this undesirable custom, but it is not easy to abolish it altogether.

Closet Accommodation.

Water Closets	435
Dry Earth	1979
Midden Privies	108

Scavenging.

This Authority undertakes the scavenging of the villages of Dyffryn, Llanelltyd, Arthog and Barmouth Junction, Friog and Fairbourne, Llwyngwril, Llanegryn, Abergynolwyn, Corris, Aberllefenni, and Mallwyd. These are let out on contract for twelve months. Contractors have to remove all house refuse between the hours of 9 p.m. and 8 a.m., and are responsible to see that the lorry or cart in use has a suitable cover. It is essential that these stipulations be carried out to ensure the dustless removal of refuse. In all cases the refuse is disposed of by tipping on suitable sites provided by this Authority, and in a purely rural area of this kind, which is so sparsely populated, there is no difficulty in efficiently disposing of refuse of all kinds.

It is regrettable that no tender was received for the scavengingof the villages of Dinas Mawddwy and Aberangell. I am also of the opinion that steps should be taken in respect of the scavenging of the villages of Ganllwyd and Bontddu.

The cleaning of privies, ashpits, and cesspools is done by the occupiers of the premises.

Smoke Abatement.

No action was necessary in this respect during the past year. We have no fall of smoke to intercept the sunshine of this district.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no (a) public or (b) privately owned swimming baths or pools open to the public.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

No action was necessary during the past year.

Schools.

The supervision of the Schools is carried out in close co-operation with the School Medical Officer, who is also the County Medical Officer of Health.

The following were closed during the past year by the School Medical Officer owing to the existence of infectious diseases:—

School.	Period of Closure.	Reason for Closure.
Arthog	10 Jan. to 14 Jan.	Scarlet Fever.
Bryncoedifor	10 Jan. to 14 Jan.	Scarlet Fever.
Rhydygorlan	24 May to 27 May.	Influenza.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 85

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 93

(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 22

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 27

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 19

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 27

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in

consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 10

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:—

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 3
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—
(a) By owners 3
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied... 10
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—
(a) By owners 10
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 0
(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made 0
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit 0

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding:—

(a) (i.) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 23
(ii.) Number of families dwelling therein 27

(iii.) Number of persons dwelling therein 97

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 0

(c) (i.) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 0
(ii.) Number of persons concerned in such cases ... 0

(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding 0

(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report 0

HOUSING.

The Dolgelley Rural District Council have purchased land for building working-class houses at Llanegryn and Bontddu, and have nearly completed the purchase of land at Dyffryn.

Tenders have been invited for 8 houses at Llanegryn, and these will be built by the end of 1939.

The proposed houses at Bontddu will I hope be also completed before the end of 1939.

The houses at Dyffryn will be started before the end of 1939.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA, 1938.

Total number of formal notices issued	5
number complied with	5
Total number of informal notices issued	12
number complied with	12
Total number of New Houses completed—	
(a) by Local Sanitary Authority	12
(b) by private enterprise	0
Number of plans—New Houses	20
Buildings	15
Visits to Bakehouses	6
Number of Notices re Defects	0
Visits to Cowsheds	76
Number of Visits re Defects	8
Visits to Milk Shops	0

Number of Notices re Defects	0
Visits to Dairies	74
Number of Notices re Defects	1
Visits to Slaughter Houses	31
Number of Notices re Defects	5
Notices re Removal of Ashes	0
Notices re Removal of Manure	0
Notice re Defective Drains	10
Number of Visits to cases of Infectious Diseases	70
Number of Houses Disinfected	42
Notices of Defective Water Fittings	18
Number of Pail Closets converted into W.C.	3
Number of New Water Closets erected	16
TOTAL number of Water Closets	402
Pail Closets	1979
Privis or other Closets	108
Number of Closets reving more than one house	8

Milk Samples—taken for Ministry of Health—	
for County Council	59
for Local Sanitary Authority	0

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

There are licensed by the County Council 7 producers of Tuberculin Tested (Certified) milk within the district. This milk is the genuine article produced under ideal conditions. It is high time the public realised the full value of milk as a food, and appreciated the necessity of having this important article of diet in as wholesome and incontaminated condition as possible. I sincerely hope that the number of T.T. producers will increase yearly, and that soon the public will refuse to consume only some form of graded milk. Samples of T.T. milk are sent once a month to Aberystwyth for analysis on behalf of the County Council, and the results have been satisfactory.

The cowsheds and dairies are periodically inspected. The dairies on the whole are kept clean, and are periodically lime-washed. In some cases there is room for improvement in the structural condition of the cowsheds, and in the sanitary conditions of the surroundings. Grooming of the cow is not carried out in the small farms. The milkers on the whole are clean in their person, but washable smocks are not so generally used as they should be.

Meat.

The slaughter houses are very small, and some are not structurally up to modern standard. They are kept clean, and are periodically lime-washed. There are no public abattoirs in the area. Small centres of population should combine in some convenient place, where all the slaughtering business of the surrounding districts can be carried out.

The few meat shops in the district are kept clean, and the meat is not exposed to contamination by flies and other injurious materials.

As a result of the survey made by Dr. R. J. Mathews of the Welsh Board of Health, steps are being taken to bring slaughter houses up to standard.

Bakehouses.

All these are very small, and are periodically inspected. They are kept clean, and are lime-washed at intervals. In the case of bread, like meat, the great bulk of it is brought in vans from the adjoining districts.

There are no underground bakehouses.

Chemical and Bacteriolgical Examination of Food.

This work is carried out for this Authority at the laboratories of Messrs. Evans, Sons, Lescher & Webb, Ltd., of Liverpool. Water analysis is carried out by The Evans Biological Institute of Runcorn, Cheshire. Samples of milk are sent to Aberystwyth as directed by the County Council.

Workshops and Workplaces.

These are few in number, and very small. They are occupied for the most part by the owner. Their sanitary conditions are on the whole satisfactory.

Camping Sites.

About 20 sites were used as camping sites in the area during 1938. Licenses were used under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, in respect of five sites.

It would be impossible to estimate with any accuracy the maximum number of camping resident in the area at any one time.

Shell-fish (Molluscum).

There are no shell-fish beds or layings in the district.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1938.

Disease.	Total Cases. Notified.	Cases Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Smallpox	0		0
Scarlet Fever	28		0
Diptheria	3		0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid	0	No Hospital Available.	0
Puerperal Fever	0		0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0		1
Pneumonia	10		5

Other diseases notifiable locally—

Erysipelas	5		0

There is no change in the facilities provided for the diagnosis and treatment of infectious diseases.

Infectious Diseases.

Of the 28 cases of Scarlet Fever notified, 7 occurred at Arthog, 4 at Llwyngwril, and 9 at Dyffryn. There was some evidence that in these cases the disease was contracted in the first place outside the district. The remaining cases occured at different times quite indifferently, and I was unable to trace the origin of the disease.

Two of the Diptheria cases occured at Tygwyn Convalescent Home, Llwyngwril. The other case occured at Corris.

Of the ten cases of Pneumonia, seven were notified from the parish of Talyllyn.

The five cases of Erysipelas were notified from the parish of Talyllyn.

Tuberculosis.

	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Resp.		Non-Resp.		Resp.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Age Periods								
0								
1		1						
5			1	1			1	
15	3	3			1		1	
25		1			1	1		
35	2				1			
45					2			
55				1	3			
65 and upwards					1			
Total	5	5	1	2	9	1	2	

The notification of this disease in the area is satisfactory.
Total Tuberculosis death rate per 1000 of the population 1.67
Total Phthesis death rate per 1000 of the population ... 1.39

CANCER.

The death rate from cancer in the area during the past year was 2.09 per 1000 of the population. The total number of deaths was 15, and of these 2 occurred in males and 13 in females.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

R. W. EDWARDS,

B.Sc., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

C